UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/AC.121/41/Add.1
13 April 1994

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON PEACE-KEEPING
OPERATIONS

COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS

Report of the Secretary-General

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NAMIBIA

[Original: English]

[29 March 1994]

Observations and suggestions on peace-keeping operations

1. The Namibian experience in peace-keeping operations dates as far back as 1989 during the United Nations operation (United Nations Transitional Assistance Group - UNTAG) in Namibia. The operation gave us an insight on how the operations of this nature are conducted.

2. Namibia participated in the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) operation for the first time and the following observations were made:

(a) Troops moved in soft-skin vehicles which are vulnerable to dangerous land-mines and snipers;

(b) The time between notification to participate in the operation and the day of departure was too short and resulted in hasty preparation of the contingent. It is therefore recommended that:

(i) Troops use armoured, mine-proof vehicles to protect peace-keepers from mines and sniping;

(ii) Six to eight months' notice will enable realistic training to be carried out in view of future missions based on the training guidelines for national or regional programmes which were adopted by the General Assembly on 8 December 1989 in its resolution 44/49 on the "Comprehensive review of the whole question of peace-keeping operations in all their aspects".

3. Based on the Somalia experience, where fighting erupted between different factions and the United Nations peace-keepers, Namibia would suggest that certain criteria be met before committing elements of a peace-keeping force. The key elements are:

(a) Whether the principal antagonists agree to a cease-fire and are all happy with the size and international composition of the force;

(b) Whether there is a clear and enforceable mandate;

(c) Whether the arrangements are likely to serve the ultimate aim of peace and lead to a political settlement in the long term.